



STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER • 18TH DISTRICT

Brater Press Release

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BRATER APPLAUDS WORK OF STABENOW AND LEVIN ON AMENDMENT TO IMPLEMENT BORDER TRASH INSPECTIONS

Hopes State Senate will act on pending legislation to supplement federal regulations

(LANSING)—State Senator Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) applauded the efforts of Michigan's U.S. Senators, Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin, today for including an amendment in the President's wartime spending bill that will require high-tech inspections of Canadian trash trucks at Michigan's border crossings. The amendment ensures that the Blue Water Bridge and the Ambassador Bridge will be equipped by May with high-tech detection equipment to search for the presence of radiological and nuclear materials and weapons that could be hidden in the garbage trucks.

"This is a great victory for safety and security in Michigan," said Brater. "Hopefully, this is just the first step in our efforts to protect our state from dangerous materials. There are bills currently sitting in the Environment and Natural Resources committee that, when added to this federal mandate, would give our citizens an added level of protection from air, water, and ground contaminants."

Senate Bill 98, introduced by Senator Brater in January, would reduce the flow of waste from other states and Canada and require that it meet Michigan's regulatory standards. In addition, she has also introduced Senate Bill 274, which would ban household batteries and fluorescent bulbs from Michigan's landfills.

“The bills I have introduced will protect our citizens and our environment,” stated Brater. “The DEQ has stepped up inspections at landfills to ensure that prohibited solid waste is not being dumped. Clearly this is a critical issue in our state on many levels. Not only must we protect our citizens from the threat of terrorism but, we must also protect our citizens from the threat of environmental hazards.”

Currently, about 200 trucks laden with solid waste cross into Michigan every day from Canada. Without inspections and restrictions there is no way to know for sure what the cargo contains. Additional DEQ inspections at the landfills and the new high-tech inspections at the border crossings will provide a much better picture of what is being shipped into the state for disposal. However, the inspections are only part of the solution. Limiting what is allowed into Michigan landfills is the next logical step.

“Senator Stabenow stated that the bipartisan support her amendment received played an important role in making sure that it was included in the wartime spending bill,” said Brater. “I hope the bipartisan support that my bills have received will act as a catalyst to spur discussion in the Senate committee and get this important legislation to the floor for a vote. Protecting our citizens is something we should all want to act on sooner rather than later.”

Senator Liz Brater represents Senate District 18, which includes the Cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, the Villages of Barton Hills, Chelsea, and Dexter and the following Townships: Ann Arbor, Augusta, Dexter, Freedom, Lima, Lyndon, Northfield, Salem, Scio, Sharon, Superior, Sylvan, Webster, and Ypsilanti. She is the minority vice chair of the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee and the Agriculture, Forestry, and Tourism Committee. In February 2003, Senator Brater was appointed by Governor Granholm to serve on the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council. Senator Brater is known statewide as a leader on environmental issues.

Editor’s Note: Sen. Brater’s most recent photo is available for download at the following link: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/Graphics/pressphotos/SD18BraterPortrait.jpg>

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